

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A pocket lighter comprising:  
 a gas container having an outlet valve through  
 which ignitable gas is released;  
 an igniter device having a reciprocative  
 5 plunger, said igniter device being operative to  
 produce a spark when said plunger is axially moved;  
 a thumb actuator operative to cause opening of  
 said outlet valve and axial movement of said  
 reciprocative plunger to thereby produce a controlled  
 10 flame; and  
 said pocket lighter being constructed and  
 arranged such that at least ten pounds of force are  
 required to operate said thumb actuator.

2. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 1,  
 wherein a valve spring is situated so as to operate  
 against opening of said outlet valve, said valve  
 spring contributing to the force required to operate  
 5 said thumb actuator.

3. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 2,  
 wherein said pocket lighter comprises an outlet tube  
 in fluid communication with said outlet valve and  
 said valve spring comprises a helical spring located  
 5 about said outlet tube.

4. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 1,  
 wherein said outlet valve is opened via a pivotal  
 lever engaged by said thumb actuator.

5. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 4,  
 wherein a fulcrum location of said pivotal lever is  
 located approximately 2.0 millimeters from an axis of  
 said outlet valve.

6. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 4,  
 wherein said lever and said outlet valve contribute

at least about two pounds of force to the force required to operate said thumb actuator.

7. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 1, further comprising at least one actuator spring contributing to the force required to operate said thumb actuator.

8. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 7, wherein said at least one actuator spring is operative to contribute at least about five pounds of force to the force required to operate said thumb actuator.

9. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 7, wherein said at least one actuator spring comprises a pair of coaxial helical springs.

10. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 7, wherein said actuator spring is located beside said igniter device.

11. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 7, wherein said actuator spring is located beneath a bottom surface of said igniter device.

12. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 1, comprising an outer housing having a housing end cap configured to be fit therein.

13. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 12, comprising an actuator spring located between said housing end cap and said thumb actuator to provide a predetermined force for operation of said thumb actuator.

14. A pocket lighter comprising:  
an outer housing having an open end;  
a housing end cap configured to be fit into said open end of said outer housing;  
a gas container located in said housing, said

gas container having an outlet valve through which ignitable gas is released;

an igniter device located in said housing, said igniter device having a reciprocative plunger operative to produce a spark when axially moved;

a thumb actuator located at said housing end cap and moveable with respect thereto, said thumb actuator operative to cause opening of said outlet valve and axial movement of said reciprocative plunger to thereby produce a controlled flame; and

an actuator spring located between said housing end cap and said thumb actuator to provide a predetermined force for operation of said thumb actuator.

15. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 14, wherein said actuator spring is a helical spring.

16. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 15, wherein said helical spring is located about a shaft of said thumb actuator.

17. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 16, wherein said thumb actuator has a button portion located at one end of said shaft, said helical spring engaging a bottom surface of said helical spring.

18. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 14, wherein said outlet valve is opened via a pivotal lever engaged by said thumb actuator.

19. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 18, wherein a fulcrum location of said pivotal lever is located approximately 2.0 millimeters from an axis of said outlet valve.

20. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 18, wherein said lever and said outlet valve contribute at least about two pounds of force to the force

required to operate said thumb actuator.

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21. A pocket lighter comprising:  
an outer housing having an open end;  
a housing end cap configured to be fit into said  
open end of said outer housing;  
5 a gas container located in said housing, said  
gas container having an outlet valve through which  
ignitable gas is released;  
an igniter device located in said housing, said  
igniter device having a reciprocative plunger  
10 operative to produce a spark when axially moved;  
a thumb actuator located at said housing end cap  
and moveable with respect thereto, said thumb  
actuator operative to cause opening of said outlet  
valve and axial movement of said reciprocative  
15 plunger to thereby produce a controlled flame;  
a pivotal lever extending between said outlet  
valve and said thumb actuator; and  
said pocket lighter being constructed and  
arranged such that at least ten pounds of force are  
20 required to operate said thumb actuator.

13 22. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 21,  
wherein a fulcrum location of said pivotal lever is  
located approximately 2.0 millimeters from an axis of  
said outlet valve. 13

14 23. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 22,  
wherein said lever and said outlet valve contribute  
at least about two pounds of force to the force  
required to operate said thumb actuator.

15 24. A pocket lighter as set forth in claim 21,  
further comprising a head cover pivotally connected  
to said housing end cap. 12